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## Statement of U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood on High-Speed Rail



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*Washington, DC* – U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood issued the following statement today regarding the \$2.4 billion available for High-Speed Rail:

“Today, we are another step closer to delivering an innovative, national transportation network that brings new jobs and economic opportunity to the American people. Since I announced the availability of an additional \$2.4 billion for high-speed rail projects, governors and members of Congress have been clamoring for the opportunity to participate. That’s because they know that high-speed rail will deliver tens of thousands of jobs, spur economic development across their communities and create additional options for their citizens as the country’s population grows. We have received more than 90 applications from 24 states, the District of Columbia and Amtrak for projects in the Northeast Corridor, with preliminary requests totaling nearly \$10 billion dollars. We are extremely pleased to see the bipartisan enthusiasm behind all of therequests to get into the high-speed rail business. Thanks to President Obama’s bold vision for a national high speed rail network, we will win the future for America.”

### **Additional background:**

Showing bi-partisan support for President Obama’s High-Speed Rail program, 24 states, the District of Columbia and Amtrak (for projects in the Northeast Corridor) submitted just under \$10 billion in funding requests.

California	Michigan	Rhode Island
Connecticut	Minnesota	South Carolina
District of Columbia	Missouri	Texas
Georgia	North Carolina	Utah

Illinois	New Mexico	Vermont
Kansas	Nevada	Washington
Massachusetts	New York	Wisconsin
Maryland	Oregon	
Maine	Pennsylvania	

The application period for the \$2.4 billion of high-speed rail money closed on April 4. Now, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will begin its official review of the applications. A merit-driven process will be used to award the newly available high-speed rail dollars to projects that can deliver public and economic benefits quickly. A project's ability to reduce energy consumption, improve the efficiency of a region's overall transportation network, and generate sustained economic activity along the corridor are among the selection criteria. At this time, a date for the announcement of project selections has not been determined. Information about the Notice of Funding Availability can be found here: <http://www.fra.dot.gov/rpd/passenger/477.shtml>.

President Obama's vision is to connect 80 percent of Americans to high-speed rail within the next 25 years. To put America on track towards that goal, the Obama Administration has proposed a six-year, \$53 billion plan that will provide rail access to new communities; improve the reliability, speed and frequency of existing lines; and, where it makes economic sense, build new corridors where trains will travel at speeds of up to 250 miles per hour.

The Obama Administration's investments in high-speed rail are also projected to create hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs in the United States. Jobs will be created both directly in manufacturing, construction and operation of rail lines, and indirectly, as the result of economic developments along rail corridors.

A "Buy America" requirement for high-speed rail projects also ensures that U.S. manufacturers and workers will receive the maximum economic benefits from this federal investment. And, in 2009, Secretary LaHood secured a commitment from 30 foreign and domestic rail manufacturers to employ American workers and locate or expand their base of operations in the U.S. if they are selected for high-speed-rail contracts.

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